

1. RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGE. IT BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO SPECIAL 2
2. DO NOT EXCEED 65 IN LENGTH. APPROVED FOR RELEASE 2004/12/02 : CIA-RDP80R01720R000600110046-0

25X1 ORIG: GACarver, Jr. / [REDACTED]

UNIT: DCI/SAVA

25X1 EXT: [REDACTED]
DATE: 16 Apr 71

CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

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(DATE AND TIME FILED)

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TO SAIGON

727
(EYES ONLY)

CITE HEADQUARTERS [REDACTED]

25X1

[REDACTED]

1. RE PARA THREE OF REF. WE HAVE SUMMARIZED OUR

2 APRIL MEMORANDUM ASSESSING SELECTED PACIFIC AREA COUNTRY

25X1

REACTIONS TO [REDACTED] SINCE THIS MEMORANDUM WAS RE-

QUESTED DIRECTLY BY THE WHITE HOUSE AND SENT ONLY ~~XXXX~~

THERE, WITH NO REPEAT NO OTHER DISSEMINATION, IT IS CLEARLY

REGARDED BY ITS REQUESTOR/RECIPIENT AS A SENSITIVE DOCUMENT.

THE SUMMARY BELOW IS THEREFORE BEING RELAYED FOR YOUR

PERSONAL INFORMATION BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE SHOWN TO OR

DISCUSSED WITH ANYONE OUTSIDE OF YOUR OFFICE.

2. SUMMARY: THE INFORMATION ABOUT LAM SON 719 AVAIL-

ABLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC THROUGHOUT THE AREA AND MUCH

OF THE REPORTAGE SHAPING THE OPINIONS OF LOCAL OFFICIALS

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25X1

FORM 4-70 3208

GROUP 1
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC
DOWNGRADING AND
DECLASSIFICATION

(20-44)

1. RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGES MUST BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO SPECIAL SIGNAL CENTER.
2. DO NOT EXCEED 100 CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.
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CITE HEADQUARTERS

TO

PAGE TWO

HAS, OF COURSE, BEEN LARGELY DERIVED FROM THE LOCAL PRESS, RADIO, AND WHERE IT EXISTS, TELEVISION. THROUGHOUT THE REGION, IN TURN, LOCAL PRESS REPORTING HAS DRAWN PRINCIPALLY ON FOUR WIRE SERVICES: REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, ASSOCIATED PRESS AND UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL. ALL OF THESE, ESPECIALLY THE FIRST TWO, HAVE BEEN ALMOST UNIFORMLY NEGATIVE IN THEIR TREATMENT OF [REDACTED] AND HAVE BEEN GIVEN HEAVY PLAY TO SENSATIONAL ACCOUNTS OF ALLEGED ARVN BUNGLES OR DEFEATS. HENCE, LAM SON 719 HAS BEEN GENERALLY TREATED IN LOCAL PRESS AND MEDIA OUTLETS AS AN ARVN DEFEAT -- OR, AT A MINIMUM, AN OPERATION THAT FELL FAR SHORT OF ITS INTENDED OBJECTIVES.

25X1

3. THE VIEWS OF INFORMED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THE COUNTRIES CONSIDERED TEND TO BE MORE BALANCED (AT LEAST BY COMPARISON), BUT THESE VIEWS ARE ALSO INFLUENCED BY PRESS

~~XXX~~

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AND MEDIA COVERAGE. ALSO IN MANY PLACES (NOTABLY JAPAN), THE DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN MEDIA COVERAGE, ON THE ONE HAND, AND OFFICIAL US GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS OR PRIVATE BRIEFINGS, ON THE OTHER, HAVE ENGENDERED SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE LATTER.

4. LAOS: SOUVANNA PHOUMA AND SENIOR RLG OFFICIALS PRIVATELY VOICED FULL UNDERSTANDING OF LAM SON. PUBLICLY, RLG BLAMED DRV ABUSE OF LAO TERRITORY AS REASON FOR OPERATION. NO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ASSESSMENTS OF OPERATION'S TERMINATION HAVE YET BEEN REPORTED.

5. CAMBODIA: THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY EXTENSIVE REPORTING ON CAMBODIAN REACTIONS BUT WHERE COMMENTS ARE AVAILABLE, GOVERNMENT LEADERS EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR OPERATION.

6. THAILAND: WHILE THAIS WERE STRONG VOCAL SUPPORTERS OF OPERATION, IN PRIVATE REMARKS SINCE OPERATION'S CONCLUSION,

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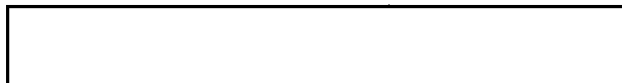
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GROUP 1
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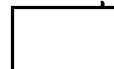
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CITE HEADQUARTERS



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RTG LEADERS CONSIDERED ARVN PERFORMANCE LESS THAN IMPRESSIVE. THAI PRESS, DEPENDENT AS IT WAS ON WIRE SERVICES, PICTURED OPERATION IN GLOOMY TERMS. THERE WAS SOME STRONG EDITORIAL CRITICISM OF ARVN PERFORMANCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, BANGKOK WORLD ON 26 MARCH PRESENTED REASONED ASSESSMENT OF LAM SON.

7. AUSTRALIA: GOVERNMENT LEADERS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN IMPROVED ARVN ABILITIES AND IN LAM SON AND VIEWED OPERATION AS PUTTING ENEMY ON DEFENSIVE. OPINION OF HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS ALSO FAVORABLE. OVERALL PRESS REACTION WAS GENERALLY UNFAVORABLE, HOWEVER.

8. NEW ZEALAND: GENERAL ATTITUDE OF GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL LEADERS WAS ONE OF OPTIMISM AND STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF LAM SON WHEN IT WAS LAUNCHED. ON TERMINATION OF OPERATION, HOWEVER, INITIAL OPTMISM BECAME MUTED.

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OFFICIALS SAW ENEMY AS SUFFERING HEAVILY, BUT ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT ARVN LOSSES COULD HAVE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES ON VIETNAMIZATION. PRESS REACTION WAS ABOUT EVENLY MIXED.

9. SOUTH KOREA: OVERALL EDITORIAL TONE IN KOREAN PRESS WAS SKEPTICAL AND MANY WRITERS ADOPTED WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE TOWARD OPERATION. EDITORIALS AT TIME OF ARVN PULLBACK GENERALLY FAVORED OPERATION, BUT WERE CRITICAL OF WHAT WAS TERMED "HASTY AND COSTLY" WITHDRAWAL. THOSE FEW POLITICIANS WHO HAVE COMMENTED PRIVATELY APPEARED SOMEWHAT PUZZLED AND UNCERTAIN OF FACTS SURROUNDING LAM SON.

10. JAPAN: PRESS REPORTING AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS WERE HIGHLY CRITICAL AND PICTURED OPERATION AS TOTAL FAILURE AND ARVN ROUT. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS REMAINED DUBIOUS OF OPERATION'S VALUE AND SUCCESSES.

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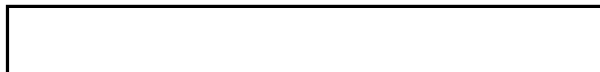
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ARMY OFFICERS PRIVATELY EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OPERATION'S LIMITED SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES.

14. MALAYSIA: THERE WAS GENERAL NEGATIVE PRESS COVERAGE OF ARVN WITHDRAWAL. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WERE MORE APPRECIATIVE OF OPERATION'S GOALS, BUT, NEVERTHELESS, REMAINED SKEPTICAL AS TO ITS SUCCESS.

15. SINGAPORE: PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW WAS PRIVATELY CRITICAL OF US "EUPHORIA" AT OUTSET OF OPERATION AND FEARED THAT ARVN WOULD NOT LIVE UP TO HIGH LEVEL OF PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS SET FOR OPERATION. IN SUBSEQUENT COMMENT TO UPI, HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT DECISION TO UNDERTAKE OPERATION WAS CLEAR SIGN OF ARVN PROGRESS. LIKE MOST OTHER COUNTRY REACTIONS, MAN-IN-THE-STREET AND LOCAL PRESS SAW OPERATION AS ARVN DEFEAT.

END OF MESSAGE

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(in draft)

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[Redacted Box]

George A. Carver, J
SAVA

SECRET

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER